

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 DHA-02 /082 W

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R 071211Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4847

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSYLONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN NY

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 3007

DEPT PASS ALL AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SF, PINS

SUBJ: BLACK URBAN COUNCILS TO GET MORE AUTHORITY

REF: PRETORIA 2999

1. ON JULY 4 A MEMBER OF THE SOWETO URBAN BANTU COUNCIL DESCRIBED TO CONGEN JOHANNESBURG THE DISCUSSION BETWEEN UBC DELEGATION AND MIN BANTU AFFAIRS BOTHA WHICH LED TO CHANGES IN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS REPORTED REFTEL.

2. SOURCE SAID THAT UBC'S DEMAND TO BOTHA LAST WEEK WAS THAT COMPULSORY REQUIREMENT BE DROPPED. TALKS LASTED NINE HOURS, AND BOTHA LISTENED PATIENTLY THROUGHOUT. UBC DELEGATION WAS PLEASED THAT BOTHA RECEIVED AND LISTENED TO GROUP, THE FIRST SUCH AUDIENCE IT HAD HAD. BEYOND AFRIKAANS-MEDIUM ISSUE DISCUSSED, UBC DELEGATION ALSO STATED THAT
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SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT AND HOMELANDS POLICY SHOULD NOT

BE MADE TO APPLY TO URBAN BLACKS, WHO SHOULD BE PERMITTED, IN FIRST INSTANCE, DIRECT REPRESENTATION IN PROVINCIAL COUNCILS, ALONG WITH HAVING REAL POWERS IN THEIR OWN MUNICIPAL COUNCILS. DELEGATION DID NOT SEEK AT THIS TIME DIRECT REPRESENTATION IN NATIONAL LEGISLATURE.

3. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. RAND DAILY MAIL OF JULY 7 REPORTED THAT J.C. DE VILLIERS, DIRECTOR OF WEST RAND ADMINISTRATION BOARD, SAID BOARD HAD ALREADY "GIVEN GREEN LIGHT" TO PLANS TO CONFER "REAL POWERS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT" ON SOWETO URBAN BANTU COUNCIL. ASSERTING THAT PLAN HAD BEEN UNDER DISCUSSION LONG BEFORE RECENT RIOTS IN SOWETO AND OTHER TOWNSHIPS, DE VILLIERS SAID INITIAL DISCUSSIONS HAD BEEN HELD IN MARCH 1975 WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF SOWETO, DOBSONVILLE, MEADOWLANDS AND DIEPKLOOF. SECTION 4 OF URBAN BANTU COUNCILS ACT PROVIDES THAT MINISTER MAY GIVE COUNCILS WHATEVER POWERS HE FEELS MAY BE NECESSARY FOR PROPER FUNCTIONING. THOUGH HE DID NOT SPECIFY WHAT POWERS MIGHT BE INVOLVED, DE VILLIERS SAID "I HAD A QUIET CHAT IN PRETORIA AND GOT THE GREEN LIGHT FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS." HE SAID THAT ONCE AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED AMONG REPRESENTATIVES OF THE VARIOUS AREAS INVOLVED, THE PLAN COULD MOVE FORWARD.
END UNCLASSIFIED

4. COMMENT: THIS PUBLIC RESPONSE APPEARS TO BE LITTLE MORE THAN BUREAUCRATIC EFFORT TO DIVERT CRITICISM: SAG COULD WELL HAVE MOVED MORE RAPIDLY ON SUCH PLANS, HAD IT WISHED TO DO SO.
BOWDLER

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ALL AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS.

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